Indianapolis *Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor*

SUSTAININDY

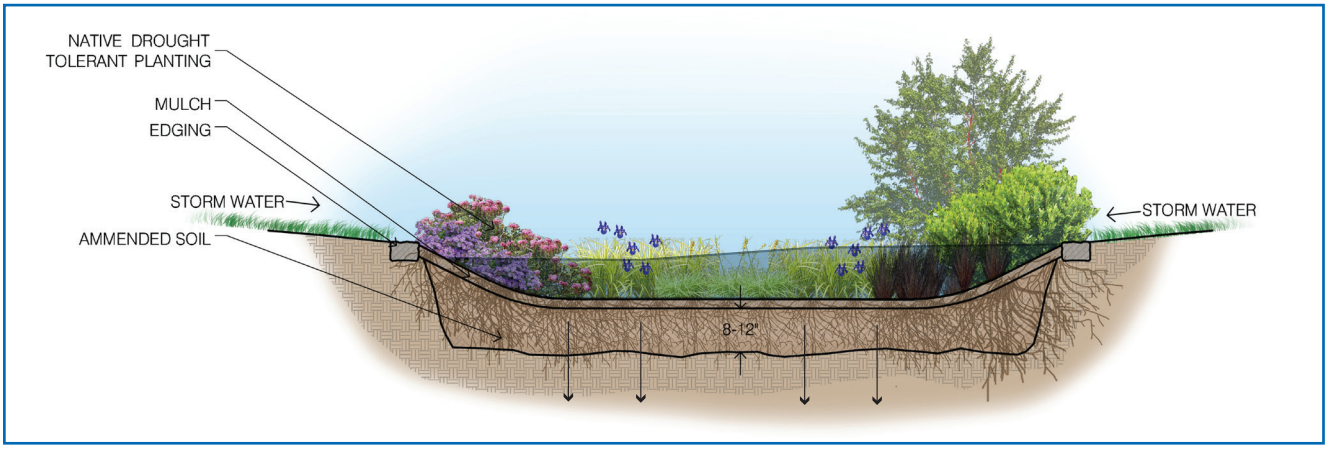
Department of Public Works

03-21-2011

WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF A RAIN GARDEN AND NATIVE PLANTING AREA?

Rain Gardens and Native Planting Areas vary in size and application depending on specific site conditions and the property owner's preference. If you are a property owner wanting to complete a small do-it-yourself project, the small scale rain garden would be most relevant for you. The three graphics are provided below to demonstrate the various ways rain gardens and native planting areas can look below ground surface. A list of the components of rain gardens and native planting areas are also provided below.

1. **Native drought tolerant plants:** Native plants evolved to live in the climate of Indiana and have deep and intricate root systems. These root systems create channels in the soil for water to trickle through, allowing more storm water to infiltrate. The result is less storm water runoff. Native plants provide habitat for butterflies and other wildlife. Check out the city's rain garden and native planting area resource center for various planting plans.
2. **Mulch:** Shredded mulch keeps the soil moist and able to absorb rain, provides a manicured look and discourages weeds.
3. **Edging:** Rock, wood or steel landscape edging is not essential, but it will give your rain garden a more manicured look. The edging should be flush with the ground which allows storm water to enter into the rain garden.
4. **Storm water:** Rain gardens are positioned at a natural depression and designed to temporarily hold and soak in storm water runoff that flows from roofs, driveways, patios or lawns, preventing it from entering the storm drain system.
5. **Amended soil:** Rain gardens need to be well drained. Typically, 6-12 inches of soil is removed and altered with tillage, compost and sand to increase water infiltration and allow for more plant diversity. Soil amendments are important because much of the soils in Marion County are poorly draining composed primarily of clay.
6. **Drainage stone:** Drainage stone at the base of your rain garden creates void space and drains the rain garden. Often times two different sizes of stone are used to eliminate clogging.
7. **Overflow pipe:** An overflow pipe conveys excess storm water ponding in the rain garden to a storm sewer or waterway to prevent flooding.



Rain Garden Small Scale *(See typical detail SW-MS-4.5.3a)*

Mayor Ballard launched SustainIndy and created the Office of Sustainability in October 2008. SustainIndy is a bold and innovative enterprise aimed at delivering long-term cost savings to the City, building the local economy, improving our quality of life and enhancing our environmental and public health. Its efforts are designed to aggressively move Indianapolis forward in making it one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest.

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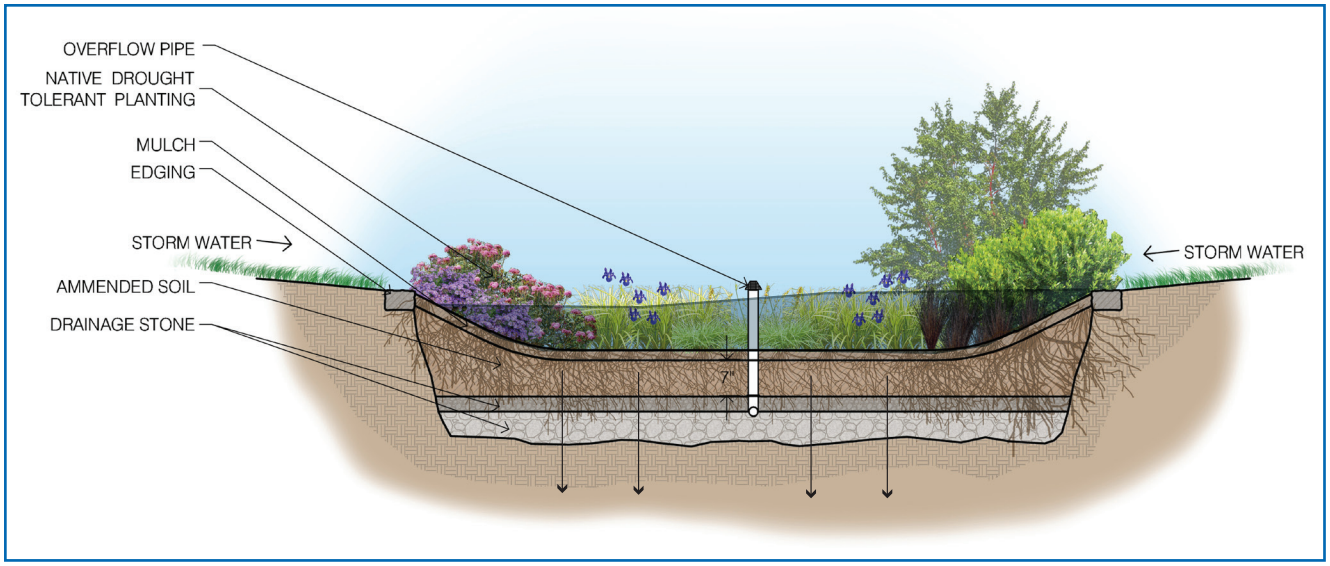
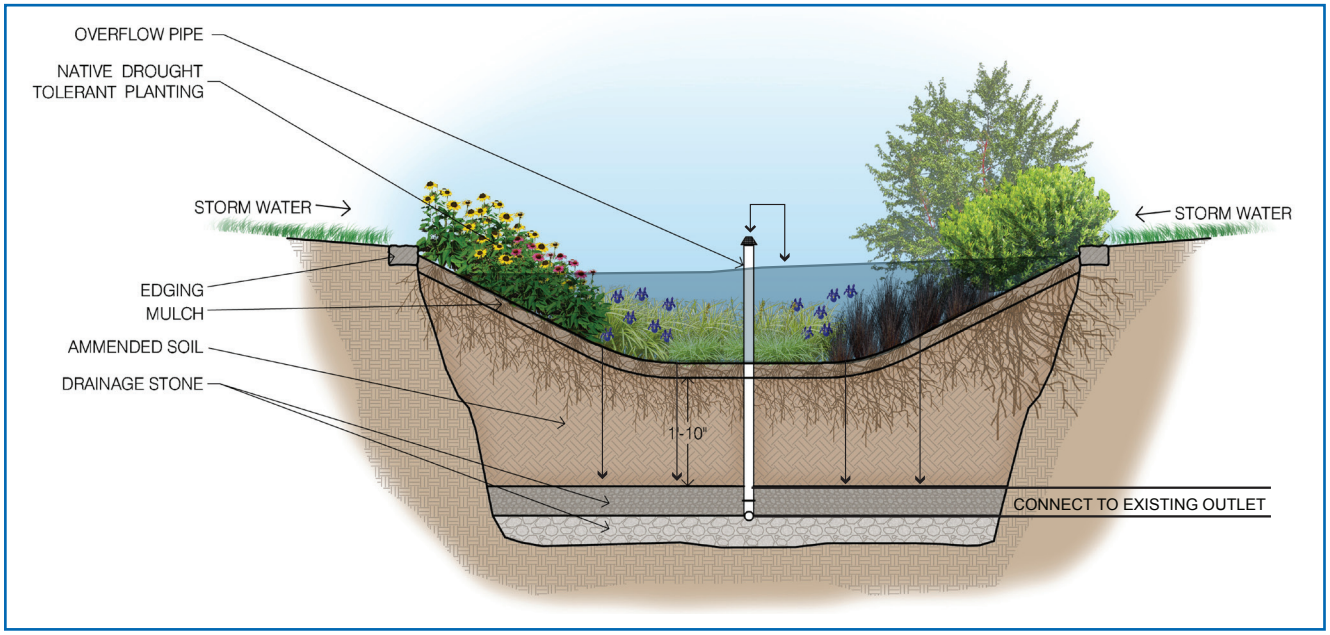


Rain Garden with Drainage Stone Small Scale *(See typical detail SW-MS-4.5.3b)*



Rain Garden with Overflow Pipe Medium to Large Scale *(See typical detail SW-MS-4.5.3c)*

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